



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

SEP 12 2013

OFFICE OF
ENFORCEMENT AND
COMPLIANCE ASSURANCE

Ms. Mary Colligan
Assistant Regional Administrator for Protected Resources
National Marine Fisheries Service, Northeast Region
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

Dear Ms. Colligan:

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for Amending the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan: Vertical Line Rule (CEQ No. 20130202).

The purpose of the amendment to the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan (ALWTRP) regulations is to propose gear set modifications designed to reduce the risk of serious injury and mortality to Atlantic large whales due to incidental interactions with commercial fishing gear along the east coast.

EPA believes that the DEIS provides an adequate discussion of the potential environmental impacts and we have not identified any potential environmental impacts requiring substantive changes. EPA has rated the DEIS as LO – "Lack of Objections." A summary of EPA's rating system is attached.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this DEIS. If you have any questions please contact Jessica Aresta-DaSilva at aresta-dasilva.jessica@epa.gov or 202-564-1567.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Susan E. Bromm", followed by the word "for" in a smaller, cursive script.

Susan E. Bromm
Director
Office of Federal Activities